

~~TOP SECRET~~



**PHOTOGRAPHIC
INTERPRETATION
REPORT**

**NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC
INTERPRETATION CENTER**

NEW RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION, SYRIA



25X1

~~TOP SECRET~~

25X1

PIR-036/72

AUGUST 1972

COPY NO 121
10 PAGES

Page Denied

Next 2 Page(s) In Document Denied

TOP SECRET RUFF

NEW RAILROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION, SYRIA

ABSTRACT

1. A new rail line is under construction in Syria, linking its largest port, Al Ladhhiqiyah, with Aleppo and the Euphrates valley. When completed, the railroad reportedly will extend to Al Qamishli in the northeast corner of the country.

2. This is the first NPIC report on the rail line and describes the status and limits of construction based on photography from January through May 1972. It contains a location map, tables, annotated photographs, and mensural and reference data.

INTRODUCTION

3. Existing Syrian railroad facilities have generally been inadequate to meet the economic and strategic needs of the country. The three greatest deficiencies in the system are:

- a. The largest and most important Syrian port, Al Ladhhiqiyah, is not rail served.
- b. The existing east-west line from Aleppo to Al Qamishli runs through Turkish territory for most of its length and does not serve the Euphrates valley region of Syria at all.
- c. The north-south line from Aleppo to Damascus runs through Lebanese territory for part of its length.

4. Approximately 208 nautical miles (nm) of track have been laid and an additional 62 nm of alignment has been constructed. The rail line is entirely of standard gauge single-track construction.

5. Major yards were observed on the new rail line at Al Ladhhiqiyah (under construction), Aleppo, and Tabaqah, and a small yard was under construction at Ar Raqqah. No new maintenance or repair facilities were observed along the new rail line.

6. Railroad construction was first observed on KEYHOLE photography in January 1972 [redacted] Information concerning the portion of the rail line between Aleppo and Al Ladhhiqiyah is current [redacted] Information concerning the portion of the rail line between Aleppo and the Euphrates valley is current [redacted] Information concerning the rail yards under construction at Al Ladhhiqiyah is current [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

BASIC DESCRIPTION

7. The rail line from Al Ladhhiqiyah through Aleppo and the Euphrates valley (see Figure 6, map at end of report will be discussed in the following three sections:

Aleppo to Al Ladhhiqiyah (under construction)

Aleppo to Tabaqah (operational)

Tabaqah to Dayr Az Zawr (under construction).

Aleppo - Al Ladhhiqiyah Section

8. The new rail line leaves the Aleppo - Hims rail line at a junction approximately 6.5 nm south of Aleppo. From that point, the line continues approximately 18.6 nm west to a point 11.4 nm northeast of Idlib. From that point the line extends approximately 28 nm southwest to a point 15 nm southwest of Idlib. It then continues west-northwest for approximately 5.7 nm, crosses the Orontes River approximately 2.6 nm south of Ech Ghourour, and turns north for 2 nm. That point (35-49N 036-18E) was the operational limit of the Aleppo - Al Ladhhiqiyah section of the railroad [redacted]

25X1

9. From the point where the track ended, the alignment of the new line continued north approximately 2 nm, turned west for approximately 3.5 nm, extended southwest approximately 31 nm, and terminated at the new yards under construction on the southeast edge of Al Ladhhiqiyah.

TOP SECRET RUFF

TOP SECRET RUFF

10. Passing sidings have been constructed at four locations between Aleppo and Al Ladhiqiyah (Table 1).

11. Between Aleppo and Al Ladhiqiyah, the line will pass through seven tunnels (Table 2) and cross 15 major bridges. All 15 bridges and at least two of the tunnels were still under construction in January 1972.

12. A new rail yard complex [] was in the initial stages of construction just southeast of Al Ladhiqiyah (Figure 1) in April 1972. It contains one classification yard, one storage yard, one probable receiving yard, one probable passenger terminal yard, and a rail spur connecting the marshalling yards with the dock area of Al Ladhiqiyah. No tracks have been laid and no freight handling or passenger facilities have yet been constructed.

25X1

Aleppo - Tabaqah Section

13. The Aleppo - Tabaqah section of the new rail line leaves the Aleppo - Hims rail line at a triangular junction approximately 2.25 nm south of Aleppo. From that point, the line extends approximately 23.6 nm east to a point 2.5 nm south-southeast of Rasin El Aboud Airfield []. The line continues approximately 50 nm southeast, turns east again for approximately 9.5 nm, and then continues approximately 6.5 nm east-northeast to a point 4.2 nm south-southwest of Tabaqah. At that point, a spur branches from the main line northeast to Tabaqah while the main line continues east-northeast.

25X1

14. A new rail yard (Figure 2) has been constructed approximately 5 nm east-southeast of Aleppo. The rail yard contains a 17-track classification yard, a five-track receiving yard, a through line, and a freight-handling facility. This facility is served by a three-track rail spur and contains one side-loading freight platform and three storage buildings, one of which was under construction.

15. The rail yards at Tabaqah (Figure 3) consist of two freight stations with a small three-track yard between them. The western freight station contains nine storage buildings and extensive open storage areas, and it is served by four rail spurs. The eastern freight station contains seven storage buildings and a large open storage area, and it is served by six rail spurs. A seventh rail spur runs through the eastern freight station to a construction site on the bluff overlooking the Tabaqah dam.

16. Four passing sidings or turnaround wyes have been constructed between Aleppo and Tabaqah (Table 1).

Tabaqah - Dayr Az Zawr Section

17. This section of the new rail line begins at the point where the rail spur serving Tabaqah leaves the main line. From that point, the line travels east-northeast for approximately 9 nm. It then turns northward for approximately 9 nm, crossing the Euphrates River on a bridge (Figure 4) 6.8 nm east of Tabaqah and 16.5 nm west-southwest of Ar Raqqa. The line then continues east for approximately 17.5 nm to a point 5 nm east-northeast of Ar Raqqa. From that point, the line extends east-northeast for approximately 28.6 nm to a point 37.5 nm northwest of Dayr Az Zawr. That point (35-47N 039-38E) was the probable operational limit of the rail line on []. The railroad alignment continued for an additional 25.3 nm southeast to a point (35-33N 039-58E) 15 nm northwest of Dayr Az Zawr.

25X1

18. A small rail yard (Figure 5) was under construction immediately northwest of Ar Raqqa. The rail yard contains a five-track classification yard, a rail spur probably used for a storage yard, and a turnaround wye under construction. No freight-handling or storage buildings were observed at the rail yard.

19. Passing sidings had been constructed at three locations (Table 1) between Tabaqah and the operational limit of the rail line [].

25X1

TOP SECRET RUFF

Page Denied

Next 4 Page(s) In Document Denied

TOP SECRET RUFF*Table 1. Locations of Passing Sidings and Turnaround Facilities*

Item	Location	Description
Al Ladhiqiyah to Aleppo		
1	35-46-30N 036-19-30E	Two-track siding
2	35-46-00N 036-25-40E	Two-track siding
3	36-04-00N 035-41-00E	Three-track siding, small rail spur
4	36-04-50N 036-53-20E	Three-track siding, small rail spur
Aleppo to Tabaqah		
5	36-09-00N 037-34-30E	Four-track siding, small rail spur, passenger & freight station
6	35-55-20N 037-58-40E	Three-track siding, small rail spur, passenger & freight station
7	35-45-20N 035-20-20E	Three-track siding, turnaround, passenger & freight station
8	35-49-20N 038-32-10E	Three-track siding, turnaround wye
Tabaqah to Dayr Az Zawr		
9	35-48-30N 038-40-40E	Three-track siding, small rail spur
10	35-57-40N 038-51-20E	Two-track siding
11	35-50-30N 039-25-20E	Two track siding, possible rail spur under construction

Table 2. Locations of Tunnels Between Aleppo and Al Ladhiqiyah

Tunnel	Location
1	35-51-00N 036-17-20E
2	35-50-30N 036-15-40E
3	35-48-50N 036-11-20E
4	35-44-25N 036-04-55E
5	35-44-00N 036-04-30E
6	35-43-40N 036-04-50E
7	35-39-20N 036-00-30E

25X1

25X1

TOP SECRET RUFF

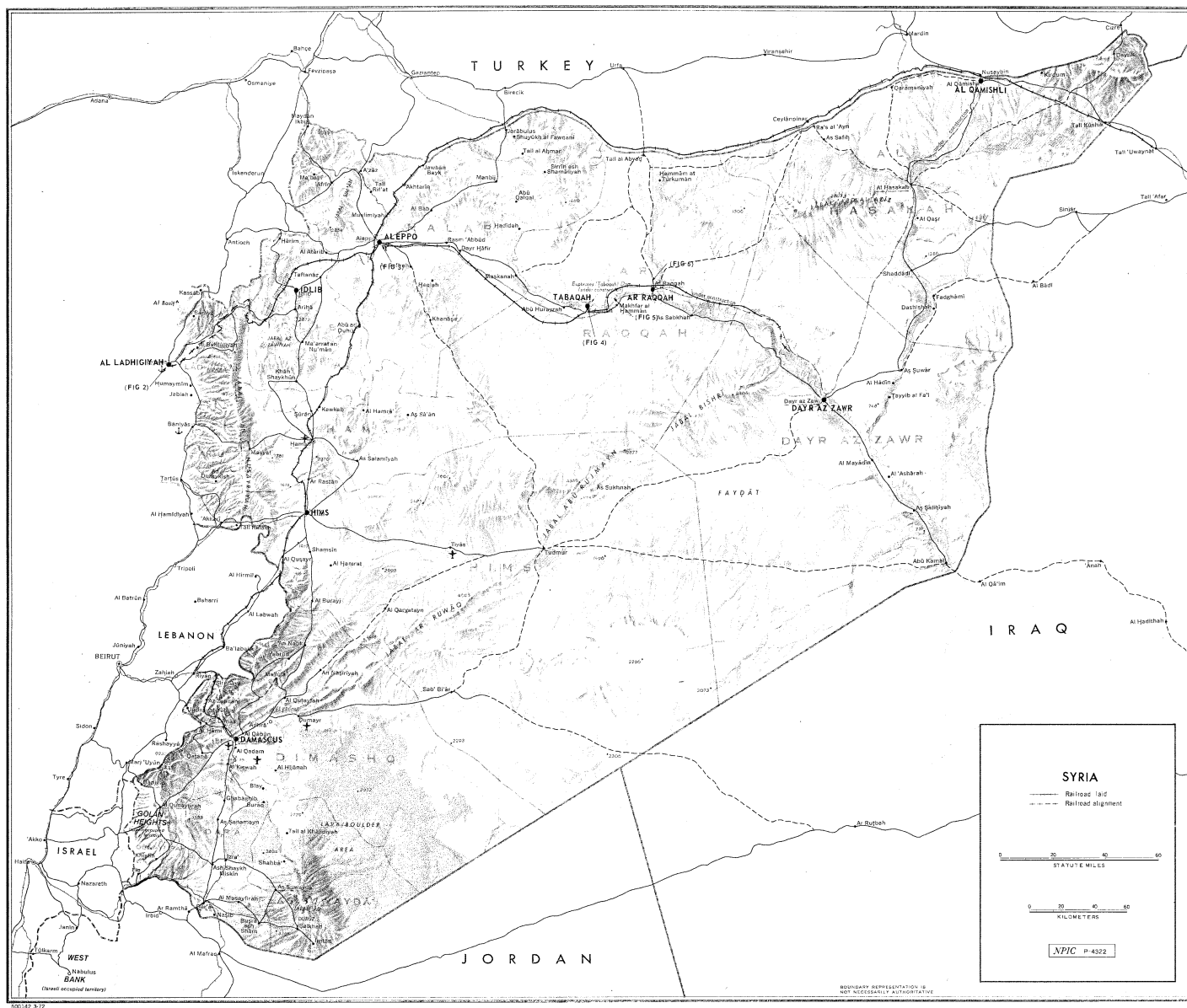


FIGURE 6. NEW EAST-WEST RAIL LINE UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN SYRIA

25X1

TOP SECRET RUFF

REFERENCES

25X1

MAPS OR CHARTS

USATC. Series 1501 Air, Sheets N136 & 137, Jun-Sep 67, scale 1:250,000

RELATED DOCUMENTS

25X1

DIA-465-3-1-71-INT, *Integrated Operational Support Study: Middle East*, Dec 71 (SECRET)

REQUIREMENT

NPIC/IEG/SGD/MEAB Project 111117NA

25X1

TOP SECRET

•
•
•

•
•
•

•
•
•

TOP SECRET